PATERIP Pre-andt 10991022 Burean 4/30/02

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Commissioner for Patents Washington, D.C. 20231

Dear Sir:

Prior to examining this case on the merits, kindly amend the application as follows:

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Replace the paragraph appearing at page 1, line 28, to page 2, line 5, with the following:

of the picked sheet is unconstrained after leaving the pick roller. Because of the stresses applied to the picked sheet in the print zone, the unconstrained shape of the sheet after leaving the pick roller is significantly rotated about the forward pinch roller 16. This is illustrated in FIG. 1, in which the constrained state prior to leaving the pick roller 10 and pinch roller 13 is indicated as sheet 12 with trailing edge 12A, and the unconstrained state is indicated as sheet 12' with trailing edge 12A'. This results in a rapid print medium shape change in